

The Wood Tavern
Near Roadstown, Stow Creek Township
Cumberland County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-44

HABS
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6-ROATO
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

HABS
N.J.
6-ROADTOWN
1-

The Wood Tavern
Near Roadstown, Stow Creek Township
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Owner: James B. Wood, 1939

Date of Erection: About 1775, with two story addition about 1810

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Supposedly John Dare about 1775, with addition by David Gilman about 1810

Present Condition: Unoccupied and in decay

Number of Stories: One and one-half and two and one-half

Materials of Construction: Foundation - stone masonry

Exterior walls - timber
frame brick filled and
clapboarded

Interior walls -

Chimneys - brick, built
into inside of gable end
walls

Roof - gable, wood shingled

Historical Data:

Title to this house has been traced to 20
March 1810, on which date David Gilman* devised to

*Probably the "David Gillmon, living near Roadstown
in Cumberland County" who advertised theft of articles
clothing in the Penna. Packet, 8 Feb. 1773.
(N.J. Archives Vol. 28, p. 427)

his son Daniel the "plantation I bought of John Dare and others, lying between Roadstown and David Dare's farm", the conveyances cited not being found on record.

By deed of 12 October 1815, the devisee Daniel Gilman conveyed the same property as 52 acres to Edward H. Mulford, who in turn conveyed 30 acres thereof to Henry Dowdney by deed of 24 May 1816, being the part on which stands the house here considered. By deed of 30 June 1815, said Dowdney had acquired from Aubrey McWood 30 acres adjacent thereunto.

Dowdney held title until 16 April 1861, on which date he devised to his wife Cynthia Dowdney all his real estate. On 5 February 1863 the widow devisee conveyed the tract as containing 55 3/4 acres to Lewis H. Dowdney, who passed it to Enoch Abbott on 28 January 1880, and from him to James B. Wood on 17 December 1902, the owner at the time of our survey of the house, 1939. In the last conveyance the tract is described as beginning at the forks of the road from Roadstown to Jerico, and as lying on both sides of that road.

Known locally as having served as a tavern, a description indicated as proper from its location immediately upon the highroad to the nearby village of Roadstown, the lower and earlier unit of this two-part house in that case no doubt served as the taproom. As allowed by its modest dimensions, this structure could have served only as an "ordinary" which the owner would have been licensed to operate in his own dwelling house rather than as an inn or "public house" for bed and board of guests. We have called this house The Wood Tavern in favor of the present owner.

6-ROATO.

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In regard to other inns and taverns in Roadstown, it may be of interest to observe that one David Mills stated in a published advertisement dated April 5, 1773, that he had bought and moved into the public house in Roadstown lately occupied by Daniel Maskell, and that he operated a "stage-waggon" to Philadelphia every Tuesday. (N.J. Archives Vol. 28, p. 487)

Bibliography:

A search of title in Cumberland County Land and Probate records by Frances J. Hall and by Oscar F. Benjamin, H.A.B.S. abstractor



Supervising Historian

Approved:



SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.
District Officer